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should therefore be carefully noted by our merchants and manufacturers. Mr. Colquhoun fully recognizes that the canal will do far more for the United States than it will for Europe, and he says, speaking from the English standpoint, "The facts embodied in this work point with irresistible force the lesson that, with increased competition with the United States in the Far East as the inevitable result of the opening of the Nicaragua Canal, we shall have to bestir ourselves if we desire to maintain our commercial supremacy."

The book contains many maps, plans and charts, but nothing new is added in this way to the material already published by the Canal Company. The illustrations also are numerous, and add greatly to the attractive appearance of the work.

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Proportional Representation. By JOHN R. COMMONS, Ph. D. Pp. 298. Price, \$1.75. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1896.

Within the last few years the advocates of proportional representation have won so many adherents in this country and have been making such active efforts to further their cause that an adequate book explaining the views of the chief representatives of that system has been much needed. This work by Professor Commons, one of the most active members of the Proportional Representation League, gives the most complete and the fairest explanation of the different systems that has yet appeared in English; indeed, with the exception of the work, "*La Représentation Proportionnelle*," published in 1888 under the auspices of the Society for the Study of Proportional Representation in Paris, there is nothing in any language that may be compared with it. The earlier work gives more historical matter than does the later, but Professor Commons has given us in many ways a more practical exposition of the different systems than was given in the earlier work, and his book brings the subject up to date.

It is easy to be seen from the work itself that it is written by a man who not only ardently believes in the system, but by one who wishes to convert others. It opens with a brief chapter on the "Failure of Representative Assemblies," in which some of the well-known weaknesses of our present system are pointed out. A very suggestive chapter on the origin and development of representative assemblies follows, which gives a very satisfactory explanation of the reasons why our present system that somewhat earlier seemed satisfactory enough, now proves so very inadequate. The same subject is continued in much greater detail in the chapters on "The District System at Work." In perhaps no other place can one find in compact shape, so complete

a statement of facts regarding the gerrymander, the inequalities of representation that come from the district system without any effort on the part of partisans to gerrymander the state, the injurious effect of that system in preventing the rise of worthy leaders in our representative assemblies and the advantage that it gives to the lobby. The chapter is not at all a declamatory statement regarding these evils such as we find in our partisan press, but is rather a statistical study of the same question. Incidentally it is shown also how the legislative caucus normally grows out of the district system of representation and carries its evils still further.

The rest of the work is devoted to an explanation of the different systems of proportional representation that have been recommended from time to time, and of the effects that might be anticipated if such a system were to be put in force in our own states. In the chapters on "General Ticket," the "Limited Vote," and the "Cumulative Vote," a brief study is made of those incomplete proportional systems as they have been exemplified in the State of Illinois, in Boston, and in certain places in England. The author passes, however, almost immediately to a discussion of the more important systems, the "Hare System," and the different forms of proportional representation found in Switzerland, and recommended by the American Society for Proportional Representation. It is clear that Professor Commons, while doing full justice to the "Hare System," nevertheless, himself, believes that the "Swiss System" is more practical for immediate adoption here, and is the one that should be advocated in this country. Inasmuch as there have been so decided differences of opinion within the ranks of the advocates of proportional representation themselves, as to the relative merits of the different systems, Professor Commons acted wisely in not merely explaining with great care, and in a spirit of perfect fairness the Hare and Gove systems, but he also has put in an appendix to his work a form of law for the election of municipal boards in California, prepared by Mr. Alfred Cridge, of San Francisco, perhaps the most ardent and ablest advocate of the Hare System in the United States, and has also printed the Gove bill that was presented to the Legislature of Massachusetts two years ago, one that has been advocated by many reformers in this country.

The later chapters of the book giving the author's opinions as to the application of the system in city government, and in the promotion of various social reforms, are written in a temperate manner and are full of good sense. The author recognizes not merely the necessity, but also the advantages of the party system of government, and in the advocacy of the Swiss plan, presents a form of law that

could be adapted with no constitutional change to the Australian ballot system as found in most of our states. The objections of the practical politicians to the plan are met in a candid spirit, and their validity, so far as they are valid, fully recognized; but the additional advantages of the system that he advocates are, of course, also suggested. The most ardent advocate of the present party system, could have little to say against the spirit with which the subject is treated in these chapters.

The author believes that it would be wise for this system to be applied first in the election of boards of aldermen of city governments, and like local bodies, and then, after it had shown its excellence, it might gradually be extended to our states, and possibly, with certain modifications, to our national government. Special students of the subject will be grateful for the large amount of carefully prepared statistical material, and for a detailed explanation of some of the more intricate systems that are not generally known, and regarding which it is somewhat difficult to get material.

It is to be hoped that the work will have an extensive sale, and will thus spread the knowledge of the system widely among our voters. A system that has proved so successful, especially in Switzerland, and that would apparently exercise so strong an influence toward reforming our political abuses, ought to be understood by our more thoughtful citizens, whether they would be ready to vote for its immediate adoption in our city governments or not.

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The Development of Parliament During the Nineteenth Century.

By G. LOWNDES DICKINSON, M. A., Fellow of Kings College, Cambridge, Pp. 183. London. Longmans, Green & Co., 1895.

During the last twelve months there has appeared a series of publications on modern political development, which stands in curious contrast with earlier publications on the same subject. By far the greater number of these have taken the advance of democracy during the nineteenth century for their text. The more recent publications are characterized by a tone of pessimism which was foreign to the political thought of the '60's and '70's. As in most of the writings on politics, England and English political development have been made the main subjects of discussion. In the volume under review, Mr. Dickinson gives a succinct account of the successive steps in the extension of political privileges from the Reform Act of 1832 to the present time. The tendency of political parties to bid for the support of different elements of the population, and the extension of the